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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 15 titles deal with the following topics: (1) the development of a module to attain the leadership competency of encouraging improved interpersonal communication through feedback; (2) communicating in an American Taoist community; (3) the structural features, interaction patterns, and function of friendship for reticent and nonreticent populations; (4) the effects of interviewees' nonverbal behavior on interviewers' evaluations during a selection interview; (5) seat selection as nonverbal communication; (6) the relationship between small group discussion and self-reflexive evaluation; (7) the impact of fatigue on communication in a dual-career family; (8) therapeutic change in family systems; (9) relational schemata; (10) cultural influences on caretaker-infant interaction; (11) the development of a measure of rhetorical competence in interpersonal communication; (12) mass and vernacular technologies for interpersonal communication via computer; (13) the relationship between communicator style and marital adjustment; (14) the theoretical and empirical integration of two approaches to investigating marital interaction; and (15) the function and significance of metacommunication within marriage. (FL)

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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Crawford, Lyall Clifford
COMMUNICATING IN AN AMERICAN TAOIST COMMUNITY: NATURALISTIC INQUIRY IN A COMMUNE

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODULE TO ATTAIN THE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY OF ENCOURAGING IMPROVED INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION THROUGH FEEDBACK

Order No. DA8321249

CASLER, LOUISE BUTTERLY, ED.D. *Temple University*, 1983. 195pp. Major Adviser: Dr. Edward B. Brower

The study investigated the use of the research and development methodology to develop a learning instrument, namely, a module. An identified and verified vocational education leadership competency was selected as the topic of the module, and the assessment instrument which had been developed and verified for this competency was used as the basis for the module development. The assessment instrument was subjected to further review and verification. Following this, a literature review was conducted. Working from this base, a module was developed. The module was then submitted to experts in the fields of education and of communication and to vocational education administrators for review. Following review and revision, the module was pilot tested.

Using data gained from the pilot test, the module was further revised. The revised module was then field tested. The results of the field test, including review of the videotaped simulation experiences by an independent judge, indicated that the module development process was successful.

COMMUNICATING IN AN AMERICAN TAOIST COMMUNITY: NATURALISTIC INQUIRY IN A COMMUNE

Order No. DA8312133

CRAWFORD, LYALL CLIFFORD, PH.D. *University of Washington*, 1983. 858pp. Chairperson: Professor John R. Stewart

The principal purpose of this account is to describe and interpret the communicating in a small, self-selected group of persons living in a specific speech community. Participant observation is the method of inquiry. The study examines the experiences of certain individuals, reported primarily in interviews, and their behavior, observed principally during group interaction. The fundamental importance of context is a guiding principle throughout all phases of this investigation. Consequently, the study as a whole may be taken as an attempt to create what might be called an ecology of the communication of a particular social network.

Chapter 1 introduces the study, outlines its inception, states its premise and purpose, surveys relevant literature, delineates terms such as commune and cooperative, and provides an overview of the document. Chapter 2 addresses the theoretical orientation of the study. It emphasizes the vital importance of recognizing the researcher as the instrument of inquiry. It stipulates the priority of humane considerations over any investigative issues, and it discusses the naturalistic/ahypothetical design and execution of the research itself. The issue of adequacy or validity with regard to naturalistic inquiry is also considered. Chapter 3 presents the setting. It gives a physical description of the community's compound, looks at pertinent financial affairs, and develops an historical perspective of the community. Chapter 4 consists of portrayals of the most prominent long-term and short-term residents. It incorporates interpretive remarks into these narratives and isolates common themes (e.g., commitment and ideology) for analysis. Confrontation is identified as a pervasive feature of interaction and both intrinsic interpretations (i.e., those which derive from the context itself) and extrinsic interpretations (i.e., those which exist apart from the context) are offered as possible ways of understanding this aspect of community life. Chapter 5 is a detailed report of procedures. Retrospective remarks conclude this chapter and systemic approaches to the study of human communication are encouraged. Finally, a brief Epilogue ends the text and 13 appendices record residency characteristics, correspondence, descriptions of cultural references and other materials essential to the context of the study.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY: THE STRUCTURAL FEATURES, INTERACTION PATTERNS, AND FUNCTION OF FRIENDSHIPS FOR RETICENT AND NONRETICENT POPULATIONS

Order No. DA8317305

GABRICH, CRYSTEL, PH.D. *University of Pittsburgh*, 1982. 149pp.

This is an exploratory study comparing reticent and nonreticent individuals' close and best friendships. Three dimensions of friendship are studied: structural features, interaction patterns, and function.

Two hundred eighty-three students enrolled in undergraduate speech classes at the University of Pittsburgh participated in this study. Each subject anonymously completed two questionnaires, the Predisposition Toward Verbal Behavior Scale (PVB) and the Friendship Questionnaire. Reticent and nonreticent subjects were identified by scores on the PVB that fell one standard deviation from the mean. Of the 283 subjects polled, 43 were classified as reticent and 40 were identified as nonreticent.

The data analysis involves separately testing each hypothesis. Since two groups are compared, a one-tailed t test is used. When categorical variables are tested, chi square analysis is used. When correlation between two variables is sought, Pearson-Product Moment correlation is employed. The level of significance $p < .05$ is used in this study.

The first dimension of friendship, structural features refers to the number and characteristics of people with whom reticent and nonreticent individuals interact in their everyday encounters. Reticent, compared to nonreticent, individuals are found to live with fewer people who tend to be kin. They also interact with fewer co-workers and identify fewer co-workers as their friends. Reticents' close friends are the same sex and are not accessible.

The second dimension of friendship, interaction patterns refers to the frequency that friends participate in activities, use channels to communicate, and talk to one another. Comparing the two groups, reticent individuals talk less frequently to their friends than nonreticent individuals. However, reticents interact more with their best friend than they do with their close friends. Conversely, nonreticent individuals talk more than reticent individuals and have similar interaction patterns with both sets of friends.

The final dimension of friendship is function and, it refers to the social needs that people seek to satisfy by interacting with others. No differences are found when reticents' and nonreticents' close and best friendships are compared because most subjects report that both sets of friends fulfill their needs. The degree of closeness that reticent and nonreticent individuals feel toward their friends is also compared. Reticents feel more distant from their friends than nonreticent individuals.

THE EFFECTS OF INTERVIEWEES' NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR ON INTERVIEWERS' EVALUATIONS DURING A SELECTION INTERVIEW

Order No. DA8318659

HOLMES, JOHN LESLIE, PH.D. *The University of Nebraska - Lincoln*, 1983. 90pp. Adviser: Margaret H. Johnson

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not there is a significant effect on recruiters' decisions to invite a candidate for a second interview as determined by the impact of selected nonverbal behaviors on interviewee characteristics during the selection interview.

The subjects for this study included forty representatives from business and industry who recruited students during the fall of 1982 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Each representative viewed one of four videotaped selection interviews. In each of these structured interviews the sex of the interviewee and nonverbal behavior were varied while verbal content was held constant. The "high nonverbal" interviewee was defined as having good eye contact, a high energy level, appropriate affect, speech fluency, and a minimum of speech disturbances. The "low nonverbal" interviewee demonstrated behaviors that were the opposite on each of these components. The videotaped candidates were evaluated on ten global characteristics by the subjects four times during the sixteen minute interview.

Results of this study indicated that nonverbal behavior was a principal factor underlying the interviewers' ratings of applicants' characteristics. Nonverbal behavior affected ratings of all ten characteristics at the .01 level of significance. The high intercorrelations (.80s and .90s) between all characteristics after the

first vignette suggests that recruiters may have viewed characteristics in a wholistic manner and not as distinct entities.

No significant differences in recruiters' ratings of the two sexes were observed. However, significant differences were observed in a recruiter's ratings of the high and low nonverbal videotaped candidates. Multiple regression and analysis of variance techniques demonstrated that the subjects rated such characteristics as "Enthusiasm/Motivation," "Persuasiveness," "Pleasant Personality," and "Confidence in Self" as being most important of the ten global characteristics under consideration for the composite rating.

This study indicates that recruiters consider nonverbal behavior as a major factor in their ratings of applicants. College placement counselors, therefore, should provide assistance to applicants in developing appropriate nonverbal behaviors.

SEAT SELECTION AS NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Order No. DA8321072

HUFMAN, MELODY JAN, PH.D. *University of Denver*. 1983. 114pp.

The objective of this study was to determine on what basis students select their seats in the classroom. Specifically the study attempted to determine if there was a relationship between communication style, seat selection and attraction. There were five hypotheses: (1) an assertive individual will be more likely to sit in the assertive zone than in the unassertive zone. (2) A low assertive individual will be more likely to sit in the unassertive zone than in the assertive zone. (3) A responsive individual will be more likely to sit in the responsive zone than in the unresponsive zone. (4) A low responsive individual will be more likely to sit in the unresponsive zone than in the responsive zone. (5) Individuals will alter their original seating choice so that they may sit near those individuals toward whom they feel attracted.

Individuals' seating choices were determined by allowing students to indicate their preferences on a seating chart and by noting where these students actually sat in the classroom. A sociometric measure determined the attractions of students. The Social Styles Profile was employed to determine the students' communication styles. Students were given a seating chart which indicated that their "friends" were sitting in an opposite section of the room and asked if they would like to change their seat. The actual seating positions of the subjects and their friends in the classroom also were noted.

No relationship was found between communication style and seat selection. The study revealed that when students were allowed to choose their seats from a seating chart, there were seven preferred seats and ten avoided ones. These seats were so valuable to the students that they indicated that they were not willing to change their seats in order to sit by others toward whom they were attracted. However, in the actual classroom setting students were attracted to at least one person who sat near them although they did not necessarily sit by the persons toward whom they were the most attracted. When students sat by the person toward whom they were the most attracted, they normally sat in a side-by-side position.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AND SELF-REFLEXIVE EVALUATION

Order No. DA8321445

LAU, DAVID LOUIS, PH.D. *Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*, 1983. 107pp. Major Professors: Thomas J. Pace, Jr., William E. Holdridge

Self-reflexive evaluation with its grounding in general semantics is the principle concern of this study. Its specific use in this investigation refers to the variable ability that individuals exhibit in the continual assessing they do of their role in ever-changing communication situations. Conceptually, the importance of self-reflexive evaluation is that it provides the means by which individuals manage their own contribution in communication situations. Central to the appropriateness of this self-management is the referential adequacy of the self-reflexive evaluations.

The purpose of this study is to examine empirically the importance of self-reflexive evaluation in small group discussion. This relationship is analyzed by comparing (1) peer participant evaluation and self-reflexive evaluation, (2) observer participant evaluation and self-reflexive evaluation, and (3) judge evaluation of group solutions and group self-reflexive evaluation

The results of the analyses conducted did reveal support for the positive relationship between small group discussion effectiveness and self-reflexive evaluation. Thus, the evidence suggests self-reflexive evaluation may influence small group discussion effectiveness, and the evidence lends empirical support to the conceptual importance of adequate self-reflexive evaluation to appropriate self-management in communication situations.

THE IMPACT OF FATIGUE ON COMMUNICATION: A STUDY OF THE DUAL-CAREER LIFESTYLE

Order No. DA8318094

LITTERST, JUDITH KAY, PH.D. *University of Minnesota*, 1983. 264pp.

With current interest in stress and the realization that psychological and physiological perception affects the way we send and receive messages, this research focused on one variable suspected of having a negative impact on dual-career couple communication: fatigue.

Mail survey methodology was employed to measure the impact of self-reported and partner-estimated fatigue on problem-solving, positive and negative socioemotional communication, and content areas discussed. Construct validation of the Dual-Career Family Communication Inventory was accomplished using factor analysis, and the Spearman-Brown split-half reliability coefficient was calculated (.70).

A sample of 400 subjects was drawn from a computer listing of nontraditional students enrolled in coursework at St. Cloud State University who were also participating in a dual-career lifestyle. The cumulative response rate for men and women combined following two mailings was 67%. The data were analyzed using Kendall's tau rank correlation coefficient.

As predicted, with an increase in fatigue, respondents display more negative socioemotional communication. This behavior occurs for all groupings except for respondents without children living at home and is significant ($p < .01$). An increase in fatigue, as predicted, brings forth less positive socioemotional communication and diminished problem-solving capability, but only for male respondents ($p < .001$). Also, an increase in fatigue affects communication content as predicted. Couples find it more difficult to talk about relationship and communication and find it easier to talk about work, family, and household matters ($p < .001$). Coping ability does not appear to significantly affect the relationship between fatigue and communication.

While 87% of the respondents believed it was important to maintain good communication when tired, half of them had some difficulty doing so when fatigued. While 44% of the men ($n = 84$) were satisfied with communication in general and when fatigued, only 23.5% of the women ($n = 114$) reported the same. A comparison of correlations of communication satisfaction (in general and when fatigued) and communication behaviors showed a significant ($p < .001$) decline under fatigue conditions.

Implications of these findings for education, business and industry, counseling and family services, and health care are presented and areas for further research delineated.

THERAPEUTIC CHANGE IN FAMILY SYSTEMS: A COMMUNICATION APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF CONVOLUTED INTERACTIVE PATTERNS

Order No. DA8317483

McNamee, Sheila, Ph.D. *University of Massachusetts*, 1983. 261pp. Director: Professor Vernon E. Cronen

This dissertation addresses the issue of change in problematic family interaction. The main purpose is to integrate a systemic model of family therapy (the Milan model) with a systemic theory of human communication (the Coordinated Management of Meaning Theory, or CMM). The argument advanced suggests that CMM theory, which has developed within a research tradition, might aid in understanding the therapeutic process; particularly the therapeutic task of implimenting change using the Milan method.

Consistent with this focus, it is argued that a theory which emphasizes the reflexive relationship between the creation of a system and acting within that system provides an elegant and sophisticated method for examining dynamic family systems. This reflexive feature of socially created systems, however, is also what makes the study of and intervention in human systems problematic and complicates explanations of change. In the following chapters, the concept of structuration is used to describe the reflexivity inherent in all human systems. Structuration refers to the mutual dependence of structure and agency and is a concept that both the Milan model and CMM theory embrace.

In the second chapter, the Milan model of family therapy and CMM theory are presented. The discussion highlights the focus on reflexive features of human systems. It is argued that the integration of CMM theory and the Milan model allows for a different view of change--a view highlighting the creative and purposive nature of actors. The chapter concludes with a rationale for such an integration.

In Chapter III a case study is presented. This case describes an initial, qualitative attempt to apply CMM theory to a Milan style therapy session. This chapter provides an initial justification for the exploratory research proposed in Chapter IV. It suggests that successful therapy is therapy that moves family members from systems in which they see their behaviors as prefigured or influenced by higher level constructions to systems characterized by intentional behavior. . . . (Author's abstract exceeds stipulated maximum length. Discontinued here with permission of author.) UMI

RELATIONAL SCHEMATA: AN INTERPRETIVE APPROACH TO RELATIONSHIPS

Order No. DA8315020

Planalp, Sally Kay, Ph.D. *The University of Wisconsin - Madison*, 1983. 455pp. Supervisor: Associate Professor Joseph N. Cappella

Studies of relational communication have focused, until now, on either relational knowledge or the relational implications of messages with little concern for understanding how the two interact during the process of communicating. To establish a framework for investigating links between relational knowledge and messages, the literature on social schemata was reviewed to determine how other forms of social knowledge (knowledge of stories, interaction sequences, self, and other persons) are linked to messages and other relevant information. Two questions that emerged from the literature were pursued. Are interpretations of and memory for messages influenced by relational knowledge and, if so, what form does that relational knowledge take?

Five studies were performed focusing on how relational knowledge influenced interpretation and memory for conversations between professors and students. The first study revealed strong expectations for appropriate topics of conversations between professors and students. In the second study, two units for analyzing dominance implications of messages were assessed: alternative paraphrases of remarks in conversations and complete conversations made up of those paraphrases. The two yielded different results, so paraphrases were chosen as the more reliable and valid unit. In the third and fourth studies, degrees of consistency between dominance of paraphrases used earlier and expectations for dominance based on three forms of relational knowledge--dimension-based knowledge, situation-specific knowledge, and behavior-based knowledge--were measured. In the final study, the impact of these three forms of relational knowledge on accuracy of memory and direction of memory errors for remarks in conversations was assessed. Very strong memory biases were found. Of the three forms of relational knowledge tested, only behavior-based knowledge accounted for a significant proportion of accurately remembered remarks and inaccurate intrusions (83% for accuracy and 85% for intrusions).

Post hoc analyses suggested that behavior-based knowledge was founded in professors' and students' recognition of their mutual rights and obligations. These findings challenge the psychological reality of well-established dimension- and situation-based approaches to relational knowledge and suggest alternatives that might more accurately capture the forms of relational knowledge used in producing, comprehending and remembering social interaction.

LEARNING ABOUT COMMUNICATION: CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON CARETAKER-INFANT INTERACTION

Order No. DA8313732

Richman, Amy L., Ed.D. *Harvard University*, 1983. 196pp.

This study examines social interaction between infants and mothers in two cultural settings and investigates the role of culture-specific beliefs concerning infant communicative competence and infant care in structuring these interactions. Data gathered in Gusii families from a community in southwestern Kenya and white middle-class families from the greater Boston area are compared to establish whether and to what extent patterns of interactions between infants and their mothers are universal or culture-specific.

Previous research indicates that early social interaction is the context in which much knowledge about the communicative aspects of language is acquired. However, much of the research and theory on caretaker-infant interaction has been done by American and British social scientists studying members of their own culture groups. Cross-cultural evidence forces us to reconsider premature conclusions about universals in development and encourages the formulation of new models for social interaction. This study focuses on twelve Gusii and nine American infants and their caretakers who were participants in a larger comparative longitudinal study. Observations of infants and caretakers were carried out in each setting using continuous event-sampling techniques. Content and sequencing of social behaviors were recorded using approximately fifty categories of interactive behavior. Information on maternal attitudes was obtained during interviews with the Gusii mothers and from written questionnaires for the American mothers; topics included ages at which certain infant abilities emerged, maternal roles, and the goals for socialization. Analysis of the naturalistic observations focuses on a subset of maternal and infant behaviors including non-distress vocalization, cry, look; and maternal talk, look, and hold. Findings indicate that Gusii and American mothers have different patterns of interactions with infants which are consistent with their expressed attitudes towards infant care and development. Infants, too, have patterns of interaction which are culture-specific. These results are discussed in relation to four previous studies on cultural values and mother-infant interaction.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MEASURE OF RHETORICAL COMPETENCE IN INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Order No. DA8313107

SULLIVAN, HENRY JOHN, PH.D. *Ohio University*, 1983. 238pp. Director of Dissertation: Richard F. Whitman

An instrument to measure rhetorical competence in interpersonal communication is developed in this study. The Theory of Rhetorical Sensitivity is used as the basis for a model of rhetorical competency. Rhetorical strategies are synthesized into four rhetorical styles: Conciliation, Persuasion, Coersion, and Withdrawal. Each style was based on the interaction of instrumental and relational communication objectives.

Each style is suggested to be most effective when it is applied to the specific conditions of a situation. Situations are shown to reflect the rhetorical situation index, a three-dimensional concept which includes the balance of power, the actor's instrumental and relational objectives, and the other's willingness to negotiate.

The instrument was to contain several items which were comprised of descriptions of interpersonal dyadic situations and four responses, each representing a different rhetorical style. The situations and style descriptions were constructed and presented separately to four groups of persons trained to recognize the elements of the rhetorical situation or communication style. The groups were asked to classify the situations. To retain item or styles, eighty percent agreement among the members was targeted.

An instrument containing 36 situation descriptions with twelve responses representing three of each of the four style types resulted from the classification procedure. In order to rank the appropriateness of the style responses, 70 college freshmen were trained to recognize the elements in the situations, identify communication styles, and rank the appropriateness of the communication styles.

Another 70 college students were trained in a similar manner and were asked to agree or disagree with the style response appropriateness. By using procedure suggested by Thurstone & Chave (1929) the resulting data were used to construct scale values semi-interquartile ranges for each of the responses, and when necessary, indices of similarity.

A 28-item measure resulted. Factor structure and internal consistency were examined. Test-retest reliability was determined and construct validity was measured by comparing the scores on the instrument to scores on RHETSEN (Hart, Carlson & Eadie, 1980).

The result is a 16-item instrument. Each item contains a situation description followed by four different communication style responses. Each of the four sub-scales contains a single factor except withdrawal which contains two factors. The test-retest reliability is .75. No significant results were shown to support construct validity when the instrument was compared to RHETSEN.

CREATING ELECTRONIC COMMUNITIES: MASS AND VERNACULAR TECHNOLOGIES FOR INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION VIA COMPUTER Order No. DA8321908

TOLES, MARY THERESA, PH.D. *Cornell University*, 1983. 267pp.

Communication forms the foundation for the growth of community, and in an information society, computers prove fundamental for facilitating such communication. Instead of extending the historical trend of facilitating large social organizations and centralized bureaucracies, computer networking today uses a "mass media" approach to appeal to a broad audience through presentation of a wide variety of database services. Other groups augment this trend by utilizing computers in a vernacular manner. Like vernacular languages, these arenas for communication grow from the people who use them. Electronic communities emerge within both mass and vernacular computer networks.

Six systems were examined through observation, interviews, qualitative content analysis of database materials and other techniques in order to determine how computers influence patterns of communication and aid the development of community. The systems, ranging from mass to vernacular, include CompuServe Information Service, the Source, CommuniTree Group, ComputerTown USA, the Office for Open Network, and Community Memory.

Mass systems provide a forum well-adapted for interpersonal communication through computers, and offer both private and public arenas for interaction through electronic mail, bulletin boards, and special-interest groups. "Fictional" communities, where participants play the role of fictional characters and engage in a sort of ongoing improvisational theatre, are also popular. Vernacular systems tend to locate terminals in public places rather than in private homes, so that the online communication does not grow to be so intricate. Instead, participants form communities in the areas that surround terminals as well as online.

Over time, mass systems take on aspects of the vernacular (such as allowing more user control) while the vernacular systems become "massified" by growing larger, more differentiated, and allowing operators to exert more control over the content of messages. The two appear to be merging into a single form of citizen/consumer-oriented computer communications system that provides a range of services with some degree of user control. These pockets of community appear to provide a *gemeinschaftliche* alternative to the predominantly *Gesellschaft* nature of today's world.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATOR STYLE AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT

Order No. DA8314913

WATSON, THOMAS RICHARD, PH.D. *The University of Nebraska - Lincoln*, 1983. 135pp. Advisers: Willian J. Seiler, John L. Petelle

This study assumes that communication is the essence of the marital relationship, and that communicator style occupies a central role in such relationships. It was argued that a more productive way of understanding marital communication would be to investigate communicator style from a multidimensional perspective. Therefore, this study investigated the association between six dimensions of communicator style (dominant, communicator image, impression leaving, attentive, open, and dramatic) and marital adjustment. Specifically, three research questions were asked: (1) Is there an association between married couples' similarity of communicator style and marital adjustment? (2) Is there an association between accuracy of husbands' perception of wives' communicator style and marital adjustment? (3) Is there an association between accuracy of wives' perception of husbands' communicator style and marital adjustment?

To address these questions, 103 married couples completed Spanier's Dyadic Adjustment Scale and two versions of Norton's Communicator Style Measure (self as focus, then spouse as focus). Subjects' responses to the CSM (self as focus) were factor analyzed to further assess the construct validity of the CSM. Step-wise multiple regression analyses were then computed to answer the three research questions, and post hoc analyses were conducted.

Results of the factor analysis indicated that the CSM appears to measure six of the dimensions originally developed by Norton. Results of the multiple regression analyses indicated that (1) married couples' similarity on six dimensions of communicator style was not significantly associated with marital adjustment; (2) husbands' perception of wives' communicator style on the dimensions of open, dramatic, impression leaving, and attentive, was significantly associated with marital adjustment; and, (3) wives' perception of husbands' communicator style on the dimensions of communicator image, impression leaving, attentive, and dominant, was significantly associated with marital adjustment.

In light of post hoc analyses, it was suggested that the findings be accepted with caution, since males and females appear to perceive a number of communicator style dimensions differently. Finally, a number of limitations were noted.

THE THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL INTEGRATION OF TWO APPROACHES TO INVESTIGATING MARITAL INTERACTION

Order No. DA8316241

WILLIAMSON, ROBIN NICKLIN, PH.D. *The University of Wisconsin - Madison*, 1983. 214pp. Supervisor: Associate Professor Mary Anne Fitzpatrick

One key to understanding a couple's marital relationship--the complex integration of explicit and implicit expectations and resulting interaction which emerges over a span of time--is to describe the couple's relational definition. The relational definition embodies negotiated agreements as to the behaviors and activities which are expected in key relational areas.

Investigation of the relational definition has produced a disparate body of literature and two major approaches of empirical study: (1) the interaction method which focuses on relational control--who has the right to define the nature of the relationship; and (2) the typological approach which identifies critical dimensions of the relational definition according to couple type. Those types are the Independent, Separate, Traditional, and Mixed couples.

The major aim of this study is to integrate these two methods: Do couples who specify particular *a priori* definitions of relationship utilize different control strategies in face-to-face interaction? Forty couples were audio-taped in their homes as they discussed both neutral and conflict topics. Fitzpatrick's Relational Dimensions Instrument was utilized to identify couple types, whereas the Ellis system was used to code communication control strategies.

The data were analyzed in two major ways. First, log linear tests were utilized to compute frequency analyses of the individual message categories for each major couple type. Second, both Markov and lag sequential analyses were used to examine how each couple type structured their interaction.

The frequency analyses revealed that (1) all couples used more dominance (strong "one-up") control moves in the conflict condition; (2) the Independent couples demonstrated the most dominance and less information-seeking across conditions; and (3) the Traditionals utilized the most information-seeking in the conflict condition.

The sequential analyses demonstrated that the interaction patterns of each couple type satisfied the Markov assumptions of stationarity, order, and homogeneity, and that different couple types do utilize unique patterns of interaction.

THE FUNCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF META-COMMUNICATION WITHIN MARRIAGE: A FIELD STUDY OF THE INTERPLAY AND THE EFFECTS OF META-COMMUNICATION IN MARITAL SYSTEMS

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This study examined communication in marriage exploring issues which affect the communication process. The focus was on a descriptive model of meta-communication as the core of marital functioning. From there followed a reexamination of meta-communication to other phenomena of marriage functioning, in order to enlarge the conceptual framework.

This study is a field study, exploratory in nature. Data were gathered from ten married couples, followed by in-depth case studies of five couples who were selected at random from the previous couples. Conceptual categories for data collection were derived from three sources. These sources were Interaction Process Analysis, Communication Theory, and Gestalt Theory.

An instrument was developed for data analysis consisting of forty categories which were based on the aforementioned theoretical framework. It was decided to run a statistical analysis on the computer in order to examine correlations between the forty variables and the quantity and quality of meta-communication. For this purpose, a SAS (Statistical Analysis System) program was used and carried through for each of the twenty individuals within the couple system and each pair of the ten couples. In the process of analyzing the significant correlations, three models of meta-communication for marriage were established. These models were high, medium, and low. Meta-communication was established as being crucial for marriage functioning. The analysis of two deviant cases showed that meta-communication can also be used to block movement and closure of interactions.

Four mechanisms reduce meta-communication functioning when predominant in marriage. These are deflection, confluence, introjection, and projection.

Furthermore, the impact on marriage of three more issues were explored. These issues were parents' marriage, rules in the relationship, and awareness and tolerance for subjective realities. It was concluded that the way parents' marriages have been perceived may determine whether or not spouses live their marriages on introjected values as opposed to being responsible agents in the construction of their own lives and marriages. The handling and flexibility of rules were shown to be dependent on the spouses' awareness of their relationship. The assumptions and acknowledgment of subjective realities of spouses in marriage substantiates the significance of meta-communication and responsibility for marriage functioning. . . . (Author's abstract exceeds stipulated maximum length. Discontinued here with permission of author.) UMI

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